

AS ONE GROWS OLDER

As you grow older,
your shadow and reaction time do lengthen.
Someone approaches and says, "Hi, Gerry!"
and he's two steps past before his name comes to you.
This can even occur with former lovers
and you know she's thinking, "Jesus Christ,
the things we did, the things we said,
every Monday and Wednesday afternoon
from four-to-six-thirty for two fucking years,
and the asshole doesn't remember my name!"
And it comes to you, and you spin on your heel
and cry, "Hi, Kathy!"
but she has just darted into the yarn store.

In the bar someone chooses you out
and you are peppered with lefts and rights
before you even begin to get hot under the collar.

In class a kid in the back row raises his hand
to interrupt your lecture with,
"You're full of shit,"
and that evening, at home, you tell yourself,
"I probably shouldn't have let him get away with that."

An editor invokes your name in insulting one of
your closest friends
so you write him withdrawing your poems
and he sends them back all right,
but accompanied by a barrage of threadbare invective.
That night you lie awake composing diatribes,
but in the morning you have something better to do,
every morning you seem to have something better to do,
until one final morning you mutter, "Ah, fuck it,"
and you relegate the note to your mementos.

Most embarrassing, though, is
when driving to work you observe a sexy lady
and late that afternoon,
delivering your report to the Ad Hoc Paperclip
Accountability Committee
you're aware of a bulge in your Levis.

ONLY WOMEN HAVE AFFAIRS

only women have affairs.